



# newsletter

JANUARY - 2021

Greetings!

HELLO 2021!!

In his classic novel, **A Tale of Two Cities**, Charles Dickens wrote - "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us."

I think at various times this year we felt all of what Dickens describes and more. What a year 2020 was. And most of us would like to say "Good riddance!!" We have now moved into a new year, filled with new hopes and new dreams. So, with that in our hearts, spirits and minds, what will we do? What will we become? And how will we get there? Those are important questions for us to answer as we begin a new journey into a new year.

One thing I do know is this . . . First Baptist Church is filled with amazing people! We are truly blessed to be part of such a great church, filled with strong, resilient and faithful people. I am blessed to be your pastor - - and I look forward to taking this journey through 2021 with you. Together, we will discover new hopes, new dreams and new ways to proclaim the glory of God in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

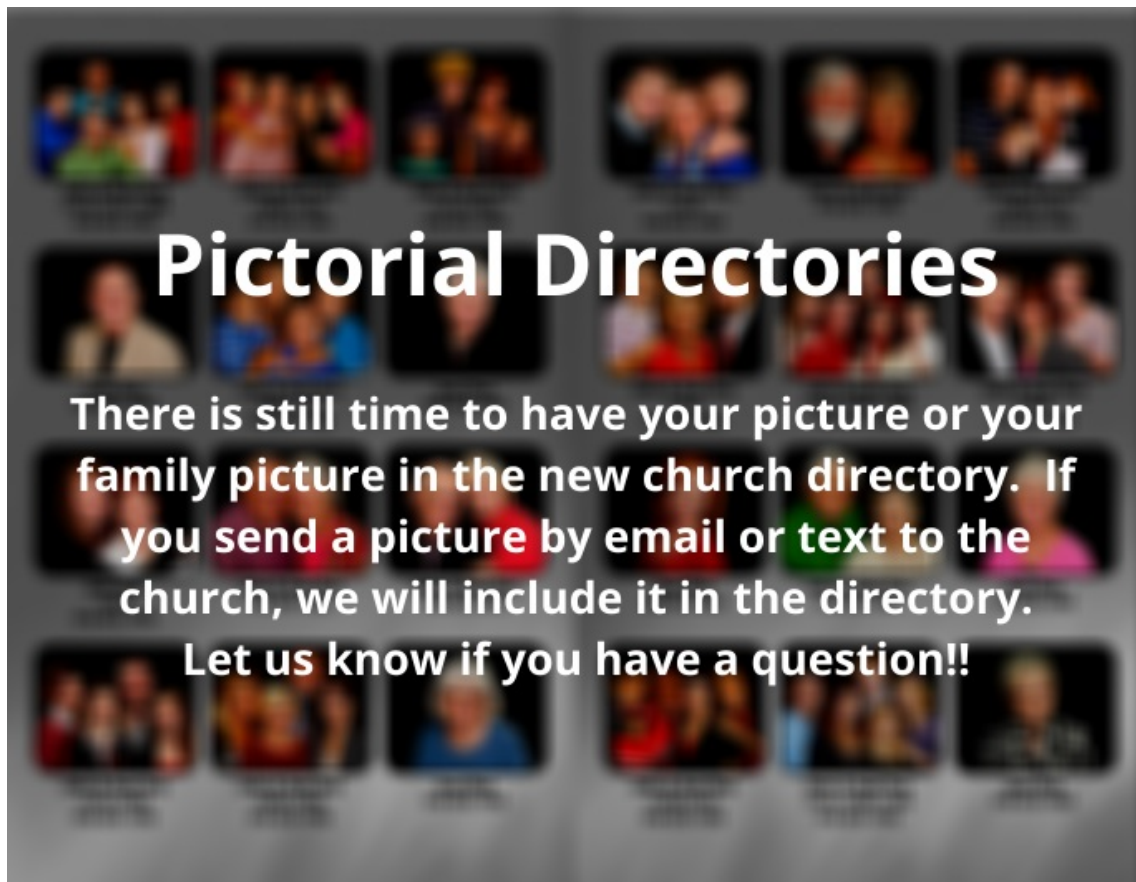
Pastor Michael

## NEWS AND EVENTS

### VIRTUAL WORSHIP OR IN-PERSON WORSHIP?

We continue to investigate when is the right time to reopen the church for in-person worship. We take our commitment to meet together and yet to be obedient to the civil authorities at the same time. There's almost always a tension between the two. We continue to meet and pray about the timing and safety of all, yet knowing we need to proclaim the good news of Jesus to a world which is very lost without Him. Continue to pray for the leadership as we meet together.

We are hopeful we will be able to meet together in the near future. We miss seeing you and your smiles, even behind those masks!!



**Pictorial Directories**

**There is still time to have your picture or your family picture in the new church directory. If you send a picture by email or text to the church, we will include it in the directory. Let us know if you have a question!!**

### Volunteering at Pete's Pantry

If you are looking for a place to help out, Pete's Pantry offers you that opportunity. As I spoke with the folks who lead this ministry, they never have a day off and are oftentimes on site 2 or 3 times per day. They need help! Even as this picture shows, if you can lay out grocery bags, you can help. They go through 100's of these

every week.

If you would like more information about how to volunteer for this ministry or others, please do not hesitate to let me know.

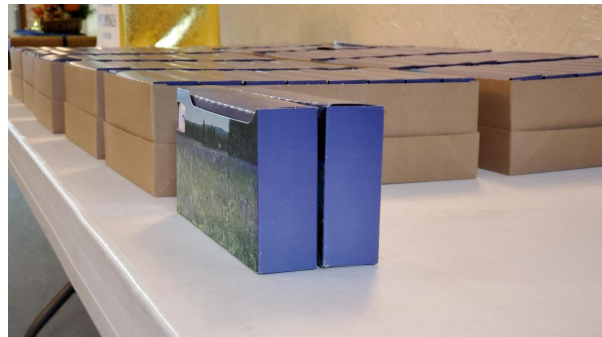
Pastor Michael



Please click [HERE](#) to access the church budget for 2021.

### Giving Envelopes

You are welcome to stop by the church to pick up your 2021 giving envelopes. They are on a table near the church office.



#### Sunday

10:30am: Online worship

#### Tuesday

7:00pm: Ladies Zoom Bible Study with Debbie Deutsch

#### Wednesday

6:30pm - 7:30pm: Impact (7th-12th Grades) Online

## A NOTE FROM MISS JILL

Hi Kids,

Did you have a great Christmas? Did you celebrate Jesus' birthday by baking a birthday cake with your family? I pray for you daily that God will bless you and your family this new year and keep you well. *Please pray everyday to ask Jesus to help you follow Him and read your Bible everyday to know how God wants you to live.* I love you kids so much! *I can't wait to see you again at church!!*



Here are some crafts and a children's lesson to go along with Pastor Michael's sermon last Sunday:

<https://ministry-to-children.com/simeon-and-anna-bible-craft-ideas/>

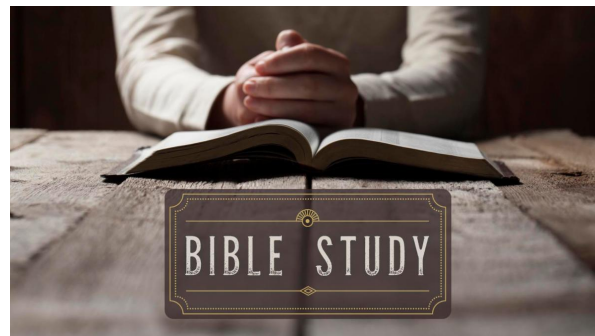
Here are some New Year's activities:

[New Years Weekly Prayer Calendar](#)  
[10 New Years Games](#)  
[New Years Eve Survey](#)  
[New Years Eve Word Jumble](#)

Here are some extra activities for kids:

[Fruit of the Spirit Word Search](#)  
[Armor of God Word Search](#)  
[Fruit of the Spirit Coloring Page](#)

## RESOURCES



### 2021 BIBLE READING

I recently read that reading for 3-4 hours per week can increase your life span by up to 20%. That's an incredible statistic. Even if that is partly true, that's great for readers. If you're not a reader, I have an idea . . . let's read the Bible together in 2021. Know your faith, learn more about who God is and what God is calling you to do and be in 2021.

With that in mind, we have attached a year long Bible reading plan. It starts on January 1 and will lead us to the end of 2021 with daily Bible readings. Basically, you will read 3-4 chapters per day. That should be no more than 30 minutes a day of reading God's word! Can you, would you . . . join me in reading through the Word

this year! As always, if you fall behind, just pick up where we're at and continue on. Feel free to send messages and ask questions. That's how we learn AND no question is a bad question!

Click [HERE](#) to access the 2021 Bible reading plan!

Pastor Michael

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## Pastor Michael's Blog

Pastor Michael does a video blog Monday through Friday in which he takes a passage of scripture and talks about it. The video blogs are relevant and only last 3-5 minutes on average.

To watch Pastor Michael's Blog, click [HERE](#).

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## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

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*"Resolution one: I will live for God. Resolution two: If no one else does, I still will."*

Jonathan Edwards

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**God isn't afraid of our doubts; He's way more concerned when we fake it.**

*"Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight."*

*Hebrews 4:13*

My all-time favorite game to play with our kids when they were young was hide-and-seek. I would walk into the room and see two feet, a knee, a child-sized bulge under the blanket, or perhaps an ear sticking out from behind a curtain. The kids thought they would be hard to find when, actually, they were hard to miss.

I think that's how God sees us when we try to hide who we really are from Him. He knows the thoughts we're too embarrassed to mention and the feelings we can't articulate, and He knows about all our uncertainties. He hears the prayers we wouldn't have the courage to even whisper and knows our hopes that are still being developed.

Yet we still try to hide who we really are from Him. Perhaps we think if we just hide how we really feel, what we really want, and how scared we really are, He won't see us behind the curtains we've made. Hiding from God didn't work in the garden of Eden, and it still doesn't work. He asks us now what He asked Adam and Eve then - *Where are you?*

God isn't afraid of our doubts. He's not put off when we struggle to believe, and He's not surprised when we don't understand what a God who says He surpasses all understanding is doing. He's not keeping track of the number of days when we feel

close to Him, nor is He docking points when we wonder if He's even there. Instead, He sympathizes with our fears that He might not be as good as He's promised.

It's the very reason God sent His Son, Jesus, to us. Jesus came to give us a living example of the God we couldn't see, because He knew we needed someone who would feel the weight of our weakness while still living authentically into both His deity and His humanity. His response to Thomas, who saw Jesus in the flesh and still doubted, wasn't a scolding; it was grace (John 20:24-29). You pick any story out of the Bible and you'll find the same. This is still His response to you and me. We need to get real enough with Him about our doubts so He can be Jesus enough with His grace. Simply put, we don't need to hide anymore.

What parts of your life are you hiding from God?

From *Live in Grace - Walk in Love* by Bob Goff

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